



StormReady® **Supporter**

The National Weather Service Office in Ruskin along with county Emergency Management Offices would like to invite your school to become a StormReady® supporter. Your school will receive free online training to help you:

- Learn how to assess the threat of severe weather
- Learn how to identify severe storms
- Learn how your report to us can help save lives!

Our goal is to help your school “weather” a severe storm without injuries or deaths. The first step in this process is to have a Severe Weather Emergency Plan (SWEP). The ultimate goal of a SWEP is to effectively and efficiently warn those at risk of the imminent threat of severe weather and to relocate them to designated safe areas. A clearly written SWEP can enable parents, faculty and students to know how to react when time is critical. A SWEP can provide peace-of-mind that appropriate actions are being taken to promote safety. By practicing your SWEP, consistent actions will be reinforced which can save lives when seconds count. A sample SWEP can be found [<link Here link>](#), but schools are encouraged to customize this plan to fit their needs.

StormReady® School Supporter Recognition

Proposed Guidelines for Schools in Levy, Citrus, Hernando, Sumter, Pasco, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee, Sarasota, Polk, Highlands, Hardee, De Soto, Charlotte and Lee Counties.

Re-recognition period: Does not expire.

The goal of the National Weather Service (NWS) Tampa Bay StormReady® School Supporter program is to elevate the level of weather safety at participating Florida schools. The program is voluntary and thus the guidelines are understood to be significantly more stringent than that expected of an average school. StormReady® School Supporters are better prepared to save lives from weather events through better daily weather awareness, planning, and faculty and student education. No school is storm proof; however having a higher level of weather awareness and planning can save lives.

1. Skywarn™ Spotter Training (includes Lightning Safety Training)

At a minimum, we ask that the principal, assistant principal(s), severe weather coordinators, physical education teachers, athletic directors and coaches complete a NWS Skywarn™ Storm Spotter training course. This course will educate you on local weather hazards. Training may be via a NWS sponsored class or online training which is available on the resources page. Re-training is encouraged every 3 years.

2. Severe Weather Threat Assessment Training

At a minimum, we ask that the principal, assistant principal(s), severe weather coordinators, physical education teachers, athletic directors and coaches complete an online severe weather threat assessment course which is available on the resources page. This course will help you decide if your school is under immediate threat of severe weather.

3. Severe Weather Emergency Plan (SWEP)

Develop a Severe Weather Emergency Plan. A baseline document of severe weather safety recommendations is available on the resources page called “NWS Recommendations When Developing a Severe Weather Emergency Plan for a School.” Schools are encouraged to customize this plan.

4. NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWRAH)

NWRAH automatically tone alerts for NWS severe weather watches and warnings, even when in silent, alert mode. The radio constantly broadcasts the latest forecast and observation information.

Schools should have at least 2 NWRAHs which were provided by the Department of Homeland Security and the NWS. NWRAH requirements for a StormReady® Supporter School in Florida are:

- i. A SAME Alert capable NWRAH receiver must be located in both the school’s main office and athletic office.
- ii. If the school is beyond a transmitter’s broadcast range then an external antenna must be connected.

5. Back-Up Weather Information

The school must establish at least one backup method of receiving real time weather information.

Examples of backup weather information sources include, but are not limited to, pagers, phone tree, Emergency Alert System, AM/FM radio station/TV, internet, cable television, Blast Fax, etc.

6. Tornado Shelter Areas (FEMA: Tornado Protection)

- i. Tornado Shelter areas on school property must be identified and prominently marked (signs, stencil, etc.).
- ii. Routes to the nearest Tornado Shelter Areas should be prominently marked if students and staff are normally located some distance from the Shelter Areas.

7. Tornado Drills

The School must participate in two annual tornado drills; one must coincide with the Florida Hazardous Weather Awareness Week statewide tornado drill (held in February).

8. Daily Forecast

Disseminate the daily NWS weather forecast to the school. Some recommendations include reading the forecast during morning announcements via the intercom or school network TV and/or posting the **Hazardous Weather Outlook** (HWO) product in the front office and near the school's athletic office. The HWO details where and what type of weather hazard is expected when strong or severe thunderstorms are in the forecast.

9. Hazardous Weather Awareness Week (HWAW)

The school must participate in HWAW, normally each February. The school must communicate the weather related topic each day during HWAW to the faculty and students (for example during morning announcements).

10. Weather Equipment: Highly Encouraged

Equipment below is highly encouraged for schools to obtain and utilize:

- i. A portable SAME Alert capable NWRAH receiver available and present for outdoor events, especially when a large population will be present (examples: graduations, athletic events, carnivals).
- ii. A portable lightning detector (or ideally a permanent lightning detection system) for outdoor activities.
- iii. A weather station. Involvement in the **CoCoRaHS** program is encouraged.

Updated 01/11/11